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Some questions
and answers
on the Council

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arts and humanities

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Commonwealth
of Massachusetts
Council on the
Arts and Humanities

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What is the Council on the Arts and Humanities?

The Council on the Arts and Humanities is a state agency whose major goals are:

- To make the arts more widely available to everyone in Massachusetts
- To strengthen and preserve our varied cultural heritage
- To support the work of cultural organizations and artists in the public interest

How does the Council fulfill its goals?

The Council provides funds and technical assistance to cultural organizations through its various programs:

- Financial Assistance
- Technical Assistance
- Historic Conservation
- Community Arts Services

In addition, the Council works with other agencies, businesses, cultural organizations, and individuals to develop new programs and find new ways to encourage the arts and humanities.

Other services which the Council funds through the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc. are:

- Artists-in-Residence
- Creative Artists Services
- Dance Touring

How old is
the Council?

What is its
relationship
to the National
Endowment
for the Arts?

The Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities was established by the Massachusetts State Legislature in 1966 to "encourage throughout the Commonwealth the practice, study, and appreciation of the arts and humanities."

While governments, both state and federal, have spent vast amounts on a variety of public services, the arts have been the last area of major public concern touching people's lives to be the beneficiary of public funding.

The National Endowment for the Arts was established in 1965 by Congress and charged with encouraging the states to "provide adequate programs, facilities and services in the arts for all the people and communities in each of the several states." Each year, through its Federal/State Partnership Program, the Endowment makes available to all state arts councils a block grant which must be matched in an equal amount by state financing. In FY '75, the Endowment provided \$205,000 per state for this purpose.

The Council works closely with the national Endowment for the Arts to stimulate federal spending for the arts in Massachusetts. Recent cooperative efforts between the Council and the National Endowment have resulted in Opera New England, a major touring program of the Opera Company of Boston.

**What is
the Council
history?**

**How has
the Council
grown?**

The original Council budget was \$25,000 allocated in 1967, and was used to conduct a survey of the cultural resources in the state of Massachusetts. Since then, the Council budget has multiplied many times, and its services to artists and arts organizations have likewise expanded.

In the last decade, both state and federal aid for the arts have grown considerably, representing the public demand for arts and services. In FY '75, the Legislature voted a budget of \$1.6 million to the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities. While this was more than a six-fold increase in less than a decade, it amounted to a state expenditure of only twenty-seven cents per person on the arts, or the same amount taken in at a Massachusetts race track in two days.

During Fiscal Year 1976 the legislature cut funding for the arts 37%, from \$1.6 million to \$1 million. The Governor has requested \$1.4 million for the Council's Fiscal Year 1977 budget.

**What is
the Council
structure?**

The Council is an agency of the Executive Office of Educational Affairs. The Council's board is composed of fifteen private citizens, appointed by the governor, who serve without pay for staggered three-year terms. Members include individuals of recognized accomplishments in the arts, humanities, business, and education. The Council board meets regularly to develop policy and to determine Council funding. A professional staff manages the Council's day-to-day operations and administers the Council services.

What are the Council Services and how are they delivered?

Funding Services:

Financial Assistance to Cultural Organizations

Financial Assistance to Cultural Organizations provides funds to non-profit professionally-directed arts and humanities organizations in Massachusetts for programs benefiting the public.

Organizations which have received financial assistance range from the Boston Symphony Orchestra to Casa del Sol and the Mohawk Trails Concerts Series. The total estimated audience reached by organizations receiving Council funds in 1975 was eight million. Some one-half of this estimated audience was outside the greater Boston area, which is consistent with Council policy to reach out and develop a broader audience for the arts.

Applications for financial assistance are reviewed by the Council staff, advisory panels of experts and the Council Board itself. All final decisions are made by the members of the Council on the Arts and Humanities based on artistic and humanistic excellence, financial need, the extent and quality of services provided to the public, the organization's ability to carry out the proposed program, and the fiscal responsibility and sound management of the applicant organization.

In reviewing applications the Council considers the organization's community involvement and support, strength of internal management and the record of its efforts to increase income from other sources. The Council also gives consideration to the geographic distribution of its total state program.

In Fiscal Year 1975 the Council provided \$900,000 for 154 organizations. In Fiscal Year 1976 the Council received 208 applications for financial assistance and approved assistance to 85 organizations. During Fiscal Year 1976 the legislature cut state funding for the arts by \$600,000, leaving the Council with only \$492,000 for the Financial Assistance program.

Historic Conservation

The Council's Historic Conservation Service provides assistance on a dollar-for-dollar matching basis for professional restoration or preservation of objects of artistic or historic significance (paintings, prints, decorative arts, manuscripts, documents, maps, rare books, etc.) Some Historic Conservation projects include the restoration of original depositions and indictments in Salem witchcraft trials, the conservation of prints and drawings by John Singer Sargent, and the production of photographic prints from glass negatives by Black photographer Hamilton Smith that show scenes of Afro-American life around the turn of the century.

The program is open to museums, historical societies and associations, and other public institutions or private organizations with non-profit status under the Internal Revenue Service's exemption statutes.

Applications are reviewed by the Council staff, an advisory panel of experts, and the Council Board. All final decisions are made by members of the Council based on artistic or historic merit, the importance of the material to the organization, the accessibility of the collection to the public, and financial need.

The program does not cover the routine maintenance of non-original material, capital expenditures, cataloging or exhibitions. Funds are provided on a reimbursement basis only. No funds can be paid in advance.

Community Arts Services

The Community Arts Services program provides funds to service organizations, arts councils, and libraries for arts and humanities programming of professional quality. In addition, the Council staff works with organizations across the state to strengthen local, community oriented arts and humanities programs. There is one application period each year. Groups which have received Community Arts funding include the Metropolitan Cultural Alliance, the Arts Council of Franklin

County and the Fitchburg Public Library. Last year the Community Arts Services program received forty-eight applications and funded twenty-four organizations.

Program Services:

Technical Assistance

The Technical Assistance program makes available to organizations short-term consultations with experts on specific management, development, artistic, or technical problems. It offers the services of a specialist for up to five days to help solve problems that require particular skills and knowledge not available within the staff of the applicant organization. Bookkeeping, administration, audience development, fundraising, exhibition improvement, and publicity are some of the areas where the recommendations of a special consultant may help an organization's staff. Examples of organizations receiving technical assistance are the Portuguese Heritage Foundation, which received funding to assist in the development and design of a proposed ethnic museum, and the Artists Association of Nantucket, for assistance in development of a sales accounting system. Applications are accepted throughout the year.

Program Development

In addition to providing funding and services to individual cultural organizations the Council develops programs that meet common needs of the cultural community. This year with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Council is publishing a series of brochures for tourists highlighting the cultural and historic attractions in Massachusetts. The Council is also undertaking a detailed survey of Massachusetts performing arts facilities as a resource to aid organizations touring the state.

New England Regional Development

The Council is working with the state arts agencies of Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, Rhode Island, and Vermont to develop regional performing arts touring and regional crafts programming.

Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc.

The Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc. is a private nonprofit organization which supports the arts and individual artists in Massachusetts and which receives funds from public and private sources. Services delivered through the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc. are:

Aid to Artists:

Artists-in-Residence

The Artists-in-Residence Program enables artists to pursue their own work in Massachusetts schools and communities for residencies varying from a few weeks to a full school year. The program is directed toward the entire community and has been centered in schools which provide work space for the artists and a focal point for the community. The artists are able to work on their own while acting as a resource for students, teachers, and community residents. The primary objective is to encourage the sustained, long-range involvement of professional artists in schools and other community sponsoring organizations.

Financial support for each residency comes from the Council and from local sponsors, schools, and the National Endowment for the Arts. In addition to funding, local sponsors provide facilities and equipment, and coordinate activities. The program is administered by the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc. and includes poets, painters, sculptors, photographers, craftsmen, filmmakers, and theater and dance companies.

Creative Artists Services

All arts organizations ultimately depend on the achievements of the individual artist. The Council's activities center around the artists' work and assisting them has always been one of its most important concerns.

To encourage the state's finest talent the Council provides funds to the Creative Artists Services Program of the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc., for fellowships of \$3,000 each for Massachusetts artists. The fellowships are awarded on the basis of artistic merit in painting, printmaking, sculpture, musical composition, photography, video, filmmaking, creative writing, and choreography.

In 1975 the Foundation gave 52 grants to: seven painters, four printmakers, six sculptors, eight composers, five photographers, three fiction writers, three playwrights and five poets.

Touring

The Council has steadily expanded its touring activities to provide communities across the state with access to a variety of outstanding performing arts groups. It has been able to minimize the expense involved in touring by working in cooperation with the National Endowment for the Arts, other New England state arts councils, and local sponsors.

Dance Touring

The Dance Touring Program brings many of the nation's finest contemporary dance companies to communities across the state for residencies lasting several days and involving lecture-demonstrations, technique classes and performances.

The Dance Touring Program is funded by the Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, and local sponsors; it is administered by the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation, Inc.

New England Contemporary Music Circuit

Audiences in various parts of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island are given the opportunity to hear live performances of music composed within the last ten years through the New England Contemporary Music Circuit, sponsored by the Council in cooperation with the Connecticut Commission on the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Under this program the Boston Musica Viva, the New England Contemporary Ensemble, and the New Music Ensemble of Providence give lecture-demonstrations and performances at participating colleges and universities. These concerts bring the work of contemporary composers to many areas that do not normally have access to this music.

Opera New England

In 1974 the Opera Company of Boston began a major touring program under the auspices of Opera New England, a network of opera centers throughout the six-state New England region. In each center, twice a year, the Opera Company of Boston is in residence providing a series of seminars, lecture-demonstrations, and workshops that culminate in a full operatic performance of a major opera.

Opera New England is a cooperative program of the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, the Maine State Commission on the Arts, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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